

(RE-)EXAMINING HORIZONS IN FEMINIST TRANSLATION STUDIES: TOWARDS A THIRD WAVE?¹

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Abstract

Feminisms are one of those framework theories that have contributed powerfully to all areas of society, including Translation Studies. The most evident outcome of this interplay is the emergence, in the 1980s, of a Feminist Translation school in Canada, which placed gender in the spotlight. Despite criticism and subsequent redefinitions of the notion of feminist translation, the Canadian school is still generally regarded as the paradigm of interaction between feminisms and translation. The aim of this article is two-fold: firstly, to advance new approaches to the practice of translation and paratranslation from a feminist perspective (within the context of a third wave of feminist translation). Secondly, to open new debates by means of (re)examining topics of mutual interest for both Translation Studies and Feminisms on a conceptual, historical and critical plane, so that subsequent studies can be fostered.

Resumen

Los feminismos son una de esas teorías marco cuyas contribuciones son perceptibles en todos los ámbitos de la sociedad, incluidos los estudios de traducción. La materialización más evidente de esta interacción es el surgimiento, en los 80, de una corriente de traducción feminista en Canadá, capaz de colocar el género en el centro del debate sobre traducción. En la actualidad, y pese a las críticas y posteriores redefiniciones del concepto de traducción feminista, la propuesta canadiense sigue concibiéndose por lo general como paradigma de interacción entre feminismos y traducción. En este artículo propongo nuevas aproximaciones a la práctica de traducir y paratraducir desde los feminismos, dentro de una tercera ola de traducción feminista. Además, pretendo abrir el debate (re)examinando áreas de interés mutuo para los estudios de traducción y los feminismos en el plano conceptual, historiográfico y crítico, con el propósito de que sugieran nuevas líneas de investigación futura.

Keywords: Feminist translation. Feminist paratranslation. Ideology. 3rd wave feminism. Gender and translation.

Palabras clave: Traducción feminista. Paratraducción feminista. Ideología. Tercera ola feminista. Género y traducción.

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Within the context of the numerous ‘post-’ theories from the 70s (post-colonialism, post-modernism, post-structuralism) and a renewed interest in cultural studies, an encounter between feminisms and translation studies (TS) has taken place that will surely benefit both disciplines. One of the visible results of this intersection can be seen in the birth of the Canadian school of feminist translation. Its contribution to TS was (and still is) such that, despite the criticism and later redefinitions of the notion of feminist translation, mainstream Translation Studies today still commonly see the Canadian proposal as the universal paradigm of feminist translation and, by extension, as the paradigm of the interaction between feminisms and translation.

Yet, in a time like now, in which feminisms find themselves immersed in a process of internal debate after realising that second wave feminism (the one that had inspired the Canadian school) is not valid as a framework in which to develop new proposals, I suggest that the circumstances are right for expanding the areas of study that could arise from the interaction between the two disciplines.² First of all, I propose we gather together and re-examine from a critical perspective some of the areas of mutual interest shared by feminisms and translation. Despite some of them having been already studied, they still lack a systematic structure because they have been largely overshadowed by the Canadian proposal. At this point my aim is to go beyond the fundamentally practical level and to address the conceptual, historiographical, critical or professional levels, which will afford a more holistic understanding of the points of intersection between feminisms and translation and thus help to promote these renewed research horizons. Secondly, I propose re-examining the practical level with the aid of the new feminist approaches to translation and paratranslation, as acts of intercultural ideological mediation (Garrido 2005), within the framework offered by third wave feminist linguistics (Mills 2003 and 2008).

1. The encounter between feminisms and translation

One of the many contributions feminisms have made to knowledge is the critical review to which they have submitted different scientific and humanistic disciplines, with the aim of casting doubt on their supposedly neutral and objective nature and revealing the fact that they actually follow patriarchal criteria (albeit to varying degrees). Nevertheless, right from the outset the feminist review of translation had an added particularity because this discipline was already fully engaged in a process of internal debate aimed at enabling it to adapt to the novel philosophical conceptions of the times. In that moment, then, TS were witnessing the birth of new approaches that did not focus the study of translation on the product itself, but rather on the process of translation, on which the product is clearly dependent:

The purpose of translation theory is to reach an understanding of the processes undertaken in the act of translation and not, as so commonly misunderstood, to provide a set of norms for effecting the ‘perfect’ translation. (Bassnett 1991: 37)

Descriptive studies began to question those theories that focused mainly on listing techniques with which to carry out a linguistic shift by going from the surface structures of one text to those of another with the least possible interference in order to remain faithful to the author’s intention and the original text. Instead, the new approaches considered “the orientation towards cultural rather than linguistic transfer” (Snell-Hornby 1990: 82), thus leading to a “cultural turn” in translation. This turn involved the incorporation of the cultural dimension “making language work as a parallel system to culture instead of as an external referential entity” (Nouss 2000: 1351).

² I use the term discipline for practical reasons, although with certain reservations, since the numerous interrelations that both feminisms and translation studies have with other areas of knowledge mean that it would be more accurate to call them *interdisciplines* or *transdisciplines*.

These new approaches also began to query the hitherto neutral, objective and invisible role of the translator. Instead, they claimed that translators actually played a far more active role, since the first step in translating (or re-writing, as it is called by Lefevere and Bassnett 1990: 10) consists in reading an original text written by an author who must be aware of the existence of various (although not an infinite number of) possible ways of reading and interpreting the text. The idea of producing a text that is equivalent and faithful to the original or to the author's intention is therefore impossible. For these new approaches it is not words that are translated but meanings; and these are not to be found in the original text or in the author's intention. Instead they are the result of negotiations within the social system in which the text is produced and consumed. Hence, the only thing that we can be faithful to is the interpretation (of the original or of the author's intended meaning) that each translator comes to through reading the text.

Ideology is considered to be a significant concept when it comes to translating. Indeed, far from understanding it as a deviation away from objectivity, ideology is now defined as a systematic set of values and beliefs shared by a particular community and which shape the way each person, and also each translator, interprets and represents the world. In fact, conceiving ideology as something apart from the translator would leave this mediating agent, as well as the actual process itself, outside the concept of cultural exchange. Objectivity and neutrality in translation are biased fallacies and, thus, the cultural turn could equally be called the ideological turn. Thus, schools of thought like the Manipulation School or Polysystem Theory now defend the idea that "ideology rather than linguistics or aesthetics crucially determines the operational choices of translators" (Cronin 2000: 695).

In short, when feminisms began to approach translation, the latter had already overcome (at least in its theoretical discourse) the debate about faithfulness, equivalence and objectivity and was asking itself questions that made it necessary to think about cultural and ideological issues. Analysing reality from the perspective of culture and ideology had been on feminisms' agenda for some time, and as a result they saw their relationship with translation as being mutually enriching. On the one hand, the debate that was taking place in TS provided feminisms with a series of new viewpoints. And on the other hand, TS recognised how connecting with this discipline helped to consolidate its proposals, but it was also capable of enriching itself by applying a gender approach to statements such as "all translation implies a degree of manipulation of the source text for a certain purpose" (Hermans 1985: 11). Feminisms, then, saw that failing to consciously subscribe to one particular ideology in translation implies unconsciously adhering to the dominant (patriarchal) ideology, that is to say, the one all societies have and that dominates both in the numerical sense and because it supports the interests of the dominant class, which therefore forces it to disguise itself and operate at the unconscious level (Althusser 1975). This is why it is presented before the translator as being 'normal', 'natural' and unquestionable common sense, and thus achieves its aim of symbolic domination (Bourdieu 1998) which turns 'unwary' translators into naive vehicles for conveying and legitimising the dominant discourse. The situation is made even worse by the fact that ideology is more effective when it is not openly manifested as such.

1.1. Canadian feminist translation

Parallel to the development of this new theoretical-methodological framework, within the Anglo-French cultural dialogue in Canada a new school of thought also came into being that identified translation as the combination of a practising theory and a theorising practice from which to examine cultural and ideological issues. Canadian feminist translation (cf. Godard 1990; Lotbinière-Harwood 1991; von Flotow 1991 and 1997; Simon 1996; Vidal 1998: 101-120) is a school of work and thought that defends the incorporation of the feminist ideology into translation because of the need to establish new ways of expression that make it possible to free language and society from their patriarchal burden. The Canadian feminist translators, Barbara Godard, Marlene Wildeman, Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood or Luise von Flotow and their male colleague, Howard Scott, produced English translations of avant-garde literary texts written by French-speaking women authors from Quebec. These texts were characterised by their consci(enti)ous attacks on the misogynistic conventions of patriarchal language and by

building up a parallel feminist literary culture, all of which was strongly influenced by the post-modern theories of language. From these texts the Canadian translators conceive translation as a continuation of the process of creating and disseminating meanings within a contingent network of discourses. Given the characteristics inherent in French (which, with its grammatical gender, continually makes the sex of the referents explicit) and in English (with its many neutrals and epicenes), the feminist translators innovated to find new formulas of expression that did not erase the gender marks of the original. Thus, for example, French *auteurs* became *authers* instead of the generic form *authors*. The strategies they used were later systematised as *supplementing, prefacing, footnoting and hijacking the text*³ (von Flotow 1991: 74-84) and were used to defend the visibility of women translators: “womanhandling the text in translation means replacing the modest, self-effacing translator” (Godard 1990: 93). They understood translation as a “rewriting in the feminine” converted into “political activity aimed at making language speak for women” (Lotbinière-Harwood 1991: 125).

Outside Canada these strategies were used by Suzanne Jill Levine (1983) to produce English renderings of “oppressively male, narcissistic, misogynistic and manipulative” post-modern texts by the Latin-American author Cabrera Infante. She deliberately chooses to become a “subversive scribe” who rewrites the text in a faithfully unfaithful subversive manner.

1.2. Criticism and redefinitions

This school made notable contributions to TS because it insisted on the need to reflect, both consciously and critically, on the elements that are present in the text to be translated before rewriting it. Since the relationship between ST and TT can be affected by a number of different aspects, it also refuted the traditional paradigm based on absolute replication between the texts, and advocated the visibility of the translator. Nevertheless, its strategies have received a certain amount of criticism⁴ that accuses them of falling into the “infamous double standard” of the traditional theories of translation (Arrojo 1994: 149) and of applying hypocritical and contradictory ethics (Arrojo 1995). In short, for this author:

they are perfectly legitimate within the political context they are so bravely fighting to construct [...] However, they are not absolutely more ‘noble’ or more justifiable than the patriarchal translations and notions they are trying to deconstruct. (1994: 159)

In addition, proclamations stating that their objective consists in “making language speak for women” under all circumstances end up by associating feminist translation with an essentialist attitude based on a distinctive feminine culture that erases the differences between women themselves and with a stable, universal definition of women as an oppressed group.

Other conceptions of feminist translation then arose to overcome the previous essentialist bias. In this regard we have to understand the proposals that have taken the diversity of women and experiences as the basis for exploring different ways of “translating in feminine”. Maier (in Godayol 1998: 161) considers her position as that of a “woman-identified translator” or “gender-conscious translator”, because her translations are not to be identified *as* women but *with* women. Díaz-Diocaretz also reflects on her feminist translation of Adrienne Rich (1985). Massardier-Kenney (1997), on the other hand, proposes a “redefinition of feminist translation practice” that contemplates author-centred strategies and translator-centred strategies.

Despite this criticism and these redefinitions, it is still common today for the Canadian feminist translation school to be conceived by mainstream TS as the paradigm of interaction among feminisms and translation. From a (self-)critical perspective, however, this is counterproductive because it restricts the productive development of other areas of research.

³ Massardier-Kenney (1997) shows how the Canadian strategies are not inventions, but re-adaptations of other strategies that have been used unquestioningly for centuries.

⁴ Other patriarchal criticism simply ridiculed them without offering any convincing arguments.

2. (Re-)examining horizons: old and new interactions

I cannot deny that the Canadian propositions made a significant contribution to TS by raising new, necessary questions about the ideological act of translation that situated gender at the heart of the debate. I also acknowledge the fact that they were very productive in their specific contexts, but my view is that in order to enhance debate and interrelations between TS and other disciplines, it is necessary to extend the areas of study that may arise from the interaction between translation studies and feminisms. A good way to do so, in my opinion, is to start by gathering some of the studies carried out in the past on other convergences between feminisms and translation by subject areas, which would allow us to gain a more integral understanding of the interaction. At the same time it would also be an invitation to take a fresh look at these areas of study, which include the conceptual, historiographical and critical planes, as well as a revised practical plane.

2.1. *Conceptual plane*

It is important to examine the theoretical discourse on translation from a feminist perspective, not only for reasons related to social justice, but also due to the potential value the (submissive or critical) reading of this theoretical discourse has in the training of professionals. Rejecting the theory implies denying the need to be critical about reality, and thus the aim of the theoretical framework is to help us reflect on how to improve the practice (Vidal 1998: 120), to understand the dimension of translation and to comprehend the limits and liberties involved in its practice.

2.1.1. Metaphorisation of translation

Throughout history metaphors have often been used to explain the act of translation, since as pointed out by D'hulst (1992) there is something about the experience of translating that requires a metaphoric language. What Chamberlain reveals in her influential essay "Gender and the Metaphorics of Translation" (1992) is that most of these theoretical discourses on translation have been based on misogynistic conceptions about gender roles (thus legitimising them). One of these frequent and well-known metaphors is that of "*Les belles infidèles*", an expression coined by Gilles Ménage in the early 17th century in France to describe the fact that translations, just like women, will be unfaithful (infidèles) if they are beautiful (belles).

The concept of faithfulness and concern about the origin/originality of the source text is present in many other metaphors about translation that are reflected in the daily language: the paternity of a text, penetration of the source text, faithful translation, betrayal of language, and so forth. In addition to the notion of property (women belong to men just as the text belongs to its author), metaphors have also been created to uphold the idea that, in marriage as in translation, legitimacy can only be guaranteed by a promise of faithfulness, and without such a vow translators can sire textual bastards (Schleiermacher, in Godayol 2000: 44).

Other metaphors have recourse to violence to explain the translation process. In the prologue to his translation of Horace, Drant justifies the 'rape' of the original text by comparing it with the process of purification a husband (the translator) carries out to prepare a captive woman (Horace's text) and then penetrate her, kidnap her, take her as his own and make her his wife:

First, I have now done as the people of God were commanded to do with their captive women that were handsome and beautiful: I have shaved off his hair and pared off his nails, that is, I have wiped away all his vanity and superfluity of matter. (in Chamberlain 1992: 61)

Sexist metaphors are not only to be found in the classical age. Steiner's hermeneutical model also presents a process of translation in four phases, "as a hermeneutic of trust, of penetration, of embodiment and of restitution" (Steiner 1992: 319), with an erotic language and a sexed model where metaphorically the man is the translator and the woman, the translation.

Classical sexed rhetoric is also used by Derrida, when he puts forward a proposal for a translation contract (like that of a marriage) by which the translation marries the original in order to be comple(men)ted in another new text that guarantees the survival of both.

The metonymic code of twofold inferiority of women and translation lies at the base of many other metaphors. This twofold inferiority arises from the opposition between productive/active work (carried out by men and authors) and reproductive/passive work (carried out by women and translators). According to Chamberlain, the job of reproduction, whether it is of human beings (done by women) or of texts (done by translators), is generally undervalued and even despised in the hierarchical structures that define our culture, despite their being absolutely essential. Thus, women and translation are conceived as peripheral elements with regard to a core element: translation is secondary to writing and the translator is in the same position with respect to the author, in the same way that feminisms are peripheral with regard to patriarchy and women with respect to men. As Florio (1603) stated, “because they are necessarily defective, all translations are reputed females” (in Simon 1996: 1). For Chamberlain (1992: 66), the reason why these metaphors are sexualised is quite clear: it makes it easier to justify the power between the source text and the translation, that is, what is presented as being an aesthetics problem is in actual fact a question of power.

From the foregoing we can gather that TS need to take a (self-)critical look that examines other possible metaphors and theoretical discourses from a feminist perspective. Furthermore, this will also have positive consequences for translation, since subverting the negative (reproductive/passive) character of women on the basis of their traditionally devalued status also raises doubts about the secondary and underrated conception of translating as a profession. But in addition to this, from TS it is also possible to propose a new rhetoric of translation that deconstructs the hierarchies between sexes and texts, and which replaces cliché language with a terminology that is capable of transmitting the active game of identities that converge in translation. This new rhetoric, far from erasing the mark of gender, could actually keep it as a strategy to re-define it, thereby freeing it from its oppressing patriarchal burden.

A draft that could be used to guide the construction of a new rhetoric of translation could be based on double-experience⁵ metaphors, since both translation and feminisms claim (each from its own peripheral position) that their subject has the privilege of having access to both the dominant and the alternative/desirable reality. Hence, feminists are familiar with both the patriarchal structure in which they are living and the system of equality they advocate, in the same way that translators are familiar with both the source language/culture and the target language/culture.

Another of the many possible proposals could be to establish a rhetoric based on a non-essentialist difference that sets out from the idea that both feminisms and translation are important tools for the study and the critical understanding of difference as it is (re)presented in language. In translation, we are referring to the difference between the rewritten and the original text that legitimises creation and production, to the detriment of reproduction (going back to the aforementioned idea of “translation as rewriting”). With regard to feminisms, on the other hand, it is the difference between genders, but also between each individual person with respect to any other (and even with respect to themselves at different times in their life), thus avoiding any recourse to essentialist stances that hold that there is a feminine and/or masculine essence that goes beyond any social and cultural limits. Instead, it should be held that the notion of masculine and/or feminine identity is (at least in part) the result of a historical construct, the consequence of a complex discursive process.

⁵ I use the notion of double experience to highlight the two endpoints of the range of possibilities, while attempting to avoid a dichotomic binarism. Perhaps to do so, it would be more appropriate to speak of multiple experiences, because the boundaries between them are so fuzzy that they give rise to an unlimited range of possibilities between one extreme and the other.

2.1.2. New conceptions of translation in parallel to the proposals of feminisms

Feminisms have been and are still enriched by their relationship with TS, but my intention here runs in the opposite direction, i.e. to show how the theoretical discourses of translation can benefit from observing, reflecting and applying certain core concepts of feminisms.

In this regard, Martín Ruano (2006: 28) claims that establishing parallelisms between the evolution of the definition of 'woman' and 'translation', as the objects of study in the two movements, is very beneficial for TS. Therefore, just as current feminisms de-essentialise and question the biological concept of 'woman' as the stable starting point for any feminist theory and policy, doubts can also be raised about whether translation arises from a material source text that has a stable signification (thus de-essentialising the ideal and traditional definition of translation). Just as the definition of 'women' has been attributed by 'hetero-designation' (since women, as a group, have historically lacked the power to assert themselves) by and to the benefit of the patriarchal system, doubts can also be raised about who has been defining translation over the years, identifying it with a set of idealised, unreachable rules that had to be obeyed (hence its prescriptive nature) in order to obtain the perfect replica. But even when translation defines itself within the descriptive paradigm, translation is usually considered to be whatever the target society/culture classifies as such, just as 'woman' is what a society/culture conceives as such. Thus, just as feminisms claim that it is questionable that a woman does not have the power to be what she wants to be (and has to behave as she is expected to in order to achieve social acceptance), from a critical perspective TS could question the fact that translation has to behave as it is expected to (in order to be considered as such), as this would preclude experimental approaches that differ from mainstream approaches.

As a second example of new conceptions of translation stemming from core concepts of feminisms, it could be argued that just as feminisms emerge as a discourse of resistance against the patriarchal and neo-liberal values that oppress and discriminate against gender, translation may constitute, as proposed by Venuti, "a cultural means of resistance against multinational capitalism and the political institutions to which the current global economy is allied" (2008: 18). Furthermore, given that multinational capitalism primarily follows misogynistic conceptions, from the interaction of feminisms and translation we could conceive a more heterogeneous means of cultural resistance that calls for political intervention to question the two dominant discourses and foster critical reflection. Thus, the social activism implicit in both disciplines is brought to light and dissipates the criticism that accused the theoretical discourses (about translation and feminisms) of being nothing more than sterile philosophical digression.

These are but two examples of the many yet-to-be-explored contributions that feminisms make to help start up debates in TS.

2.2. *Historiographical plane*

History grants legitimacy. If it is fundamental for any paradigm to have a past, for TS it becomes of vital importance given the 'youth' of the discipline as such: only recently have the theoretical reflections on translation ceased to be seen as a branch of other disciplines (linguistics, literature, philology, etc.) and have managed to consolidate themselves as an independent area of study, albeit with a deep transdisciplinary vocation.

2.2.1. Re-elaboration of the history of translation taking women/ translators into account

The construction of that past involves examining the historiography of translation. Throughout long periods of history writing was considered to be a productive/masculine activity, and this prevented many women from being able to enter the literary world as authors. Translation, seen as a reproductive activity, is perceived as being feminine and thus becomes a safety valve that enabled many women to gain access to the literary world. Nevertheless, in some cases, such as 18th century Great Britain, it was thought that only men could translate from the prestigious classical languages, the work of women/ translators being restricted to ephemeral, secondary literary texts in modern languages (cf. Agorni 2005).

There were women authors, however, who could not repress their yearnings to write, and produced their own works. The tight control over the power of authorship sometimes led them to sign their works with a male *nom de plume* (cf. Bartrina 2001 to examine the case of Caterina Albert, known as Victor Català), or to present themselves as translators (Kord 1994: 12), as a strategy that allowed them to see their books published and avoid the social criticism that would discredit their works even before anyone had begun to read them. In this way translation acts as a liberating instrument that rescues women from a silence imposed on them as authors and allows them to enter the literary world as translators; but it also acts as an instrument of oppression because it relegates them to the outer edges of discourse.

In any event, these women translators/authors made themselves visible in prefaces, dedications, footnotes, private correspondence, and so forth, where they reflected on the act of translation and on the limitations that conditioned their practice. Nevertheless, these metatexts have been lost and silenced, so that the conception that half of humanity had about the act of translation remains excluded from the history of translation.

After feminisms have brought this shortcoming to light, a (self-)criticising attitude of TS should lead to the recovery of these materials and metatexts, which will reveal to all how those women participated in the cultural and intellectual movements of their time and the way they confronted the patriarchal oppression. This will help reach a more accurate and thorough definition of the discipline, which is otherwise lacking an essential part of its history. In this line we find the works of Hannay (1985), Krontiris (1992), Robinson (1995), Delisle (2002) or Agorni (2005), who complete the historiography of translation with the theoretical reflections of Aphra Behn, Suzanne du Vegerre, Germaine de Staël, the English women translators of the Tudor period, Susannah Dobson, Elizabeth Carter, Jane Wilde, Clémence Royer, Albertine Necker de Saussure, Julia E. Smith, and so forth. In our most immediate context, notable examples are the recovery of the Galician writer and translator Emilia Pardo Bazán (cf. Freire 2006) or the Catalan translators of the 20th century (cf. Godayol 2007).

2.2.2. Recovery of the ignored women authors

Despite the fact that women were nearly always excluded from authorship, as feminisms gradually democratised public and private life, some of them were able to publish their works. A gender approach reveals that the aesthetics and literary value have traditionally been defined by a patriarchal canon, and thus the works of male authors were favoured to the detriment of women authors, whether they were classical or contemporary, from nearby cultural systems or from more remote ones. As a result, many works by these writers have been lost. In other words, there are many women authors who have not been translated in spite of having written important works that, according to feminisms, would have been translated if they had been written by a male author, as illustrated by Ríos and Palacios (2006) in their analysis of translation of Irish literature into Galician in the early 20th century.

In this sense TS have a fundamental role to play, by asking what is to be translated, who decides what is to be translated, and what criteria are used to make such choices, as the first step towards putting an end to this discriminatory attitude. Translation can also be taken as a standpoint from which to help transform the contemporary literary canon by openly choosing to recover the works by these silenced authors, which in turn would be extremely enriching for the field of translation. In my opinion, it is not a matter of collaborating with women for the sake of bonds of universal solidarity or simply due to the fact they are women (which would constitute a paternalistic attitude), but instead because their works are relevant, even though that relevance remains hidden because it does not fit the criteria laid down by the patriarchal canon.

With regard to the recovery of the classical women writers by re-writing them in other languages, translation can serve as an instrument to contextualise them by incorporating comments in which the translators discuss the reasons that led to these works' being neglected. Indeed, "recovery and commentary" are two of the strategies suggested by Massardier-Kenney (1997: 59-62) in her proposal, in which she also examines some of the most notable examples of authors that have been recovered by means of annotated translations of their works. Another example is the work of Rayor (1991), when she translates and comments on seventeen Ancient

Greek poets; of Dendrinou-Kolias (1990) with her translation of Elisavet Moutzan-Martinengou's autobiography (1989); of Kadish, together with Massardier-Kenney (1994), with their rendering of *Translating Slavery* from French; or numerous other women translators who have helped to make silenced authors known with their re-writings.

At this point we must also evaluate the work of resignification that translation can offer feminist authors who, while 'canonical' in their original context, were appropriated by other discourses. One clear case may be seen in the translations of Rosalía de Castro into English by Kathleen March, where the translator recovers the author's feminist message, which had been neutralised in its original context by the patriarchal nationalist hierarchies so that it could fit more easily within the 'common cause' (cf. González Liaño 2002).

In the case of women authors from post-colonial, remote or minority cultures, translation is an essential (and often the only) channel of communication that these writers have to be able to share their subjectivities with those beyond their borders. Even so, as Spivak (1993) claims, a great deal of discernment is needed to avoid falling into the reprehensible (no matter how benevolent) attitude of translating everything that comes from a minority, post-colonial or remote culture; to know how to assess the ethical risks deriving from speaking for others; and to avoid simply furthering the western interests of translation markets rather than understanding the real situation in which the original textualities are written and to which they belong. Apart from Spivak's translations of the Bengali author Mahasweta Devi, other important works in this field are those of Tharu and Lalita (1993), with the translation of texts by Indian authors published in two volumes.

All things considered, the fact that texts written by women are translated between different languages and cultures will allow the experiences of very different women to be gathered together; this will help to put an end to the patriarchal assumption that man is heterogeneous and woman is homogeneous, while also showing that gender is not a unifying principle for all women, but rather it shapes their identity together with other variables. Furthermore, if we refer specifically to the translation of feminist works, TS could analyse the extent to which translation has contributed to the expansion of feminist movements around the world by means of renderings that established a connection between different methodologies that were previously unknown to each other.

2.3. Critical plane

2.3.1. Criticism of translations of feminist works

Despite all the difficulties women authors face to be able to publicly voice their opinions and then get their works translated, the more feminisms advance, the easier it becomes for some authors to publish works that, because they are brilliant pieces of writing, will later be translated into other languages. An analysis of those materials shows that rigorous and conscious translations are sometimes created by resorting to different strategies that TS will be able to evaluate so that they can be used in other contexts. Yet, on many other occasions, critical analysis reveals the existence of translations of books by authors (especially feminist authors) carried out by "phallos-translators, inadequate interpreters of women's writing, given an observable reliance on engrained phallogocentric assumptions" (Henitiuk 1999: 473). Either from invisibility or from a visibility that they use to present themselves as objective and faithful rather than making their position with respect to the text known, these phallos-translators distort the original by incorporating into it the dominant ideology through a patriarchal translation.

One of the most paradigmatic cases is the English version of Simone de Beauvoir's *Le deuxième sexe*, translated by the zoologist Howard Parshley, who was asked to do the translation because the book was thought to deal with sexuality and reproduction. From critical works about this translation (cf. Simons 2001; Moi 2004; Castro 2008), it can be seen how the translator left out almost fifteen per cent of the original French text in the first volume and removed around sixty pages in the second in order to omit 'uncomfortable' facts (long sections about women's achievements in history, the feats of women who challenged gender stereotypes, taboos concerning lesbian relationships, descriptions of the hard work done by housewives, and

so on). Among the very serious consequences of this behaviour, perhaps the most outstanding is the English-speaking public's definition of Beauvoir as an incoherent and intellectually immature philosopher, and above all the exchange of accusations between French-speaking and English-speaking feminists as a result of interpreting different assumptions in the same text, which actually came to uphold disparate theses.⁶

Tension also resulted from the English renderings of texts by Hélène Cixous, Luce Irigaray and Julia Kristeva owing to the "tendency to neglect full textual explanations of concepts and rhetorical strategies" (Simon 1996: 107), which reduced the degree of acceptance and understanding of the stances held by the French feminists among their Anglo-American colleagues.

These "phalloglossations" not only affect canonical texts, but also any other (literary) text in which the author breaks away from the patriarchal aim. One case is that studied by Miguélez-Carballeira (2005) with regard to Bruce Penman's translation into English of Esther Tusquets' book entitled *El amor es un juego solitario*. In her text in Spanish, Tusquets stresses the textual/sexual physiology by portraying female sexual pleasure by means of textual images. Yet, in *Love is a Solitary Game* there are important omissions and semantic neutralisations in fragments in which the author mentions the female sexual organ. Thus, the original Spanish "*su sexo tibio, húmedo, pegajoso y fragante, su sexo flor en el pantano, su sexo nido, su sexo madriguera, en el que retroceden todos los miedos, este sexo que es para Ricardo un punto de partida...*" is rendered as "there's something warm, moist, clinging and fragrant, like a flower in the marsh where she wandered so long, like a nest, like the lair of an animal, something which takes away all fear. For Ricardo it is a starting point" (where the word "*sexo*" appears five times in the Spanish original, but is not translated at all in the English version). And even the description of performing fellatio as viewed from the woman's perspective as "*mientras agita con cuidado entre dos dedos, estrecha luego en la palma de una mano firme y cálida, oprime entre sus pechos, resigue con los pezones erizados, se desliza en la boca*" not even mentioning the penis and granting the male a passive, absent role), in English becomes "as she flipped his organ gently between two fingers, squeezed it with a firm, warm hand, pressed it between her breasts, stropped it against her erected nipples, and finally slid it into her mouth" (which introduces an explicit reference to the male sexual organ and a "finally" that suggests that, from the male's point of view, his goal is reached).

These examples show the need for a (self-)criticising attitude in TS in order to unmask phalloglossators with the tools offered by feminisms. But in addition, these tools are also essential for revealing cases in which translation plays a key role in canonising certain texts as being feminist, although in their original context they were not considered as such.

2.3.2. Criticism of paratranslations of feminist works

There is an area of analysis that is closely linked to translation and which generally gets left out of critical analysis: paratranslation (Garrido 2005). This concept, which is normally applied in literary translation, is based on the elements that surround and present the text, such as titles, prologues, notes, announcements, the cover or graphic aspects. When undertaking the translation of a book, such components, which Genette (1987) called 'paratexts', also have to be transferred to the target culture. Hence, for the time being, we could say that paratranslation is the translation of paratexts. Paratranslation is not an area reserved exclusively for translators; other mediators (proof readers, language reviewers, editors) who usually have more power to decide how the work is to be presented in the target society are also involved and act in accordance with a particular ideology, which has a strong tendency to allow itself to be influenced by economic criteria. Of all these paratexts, the iconic level is vital, as it "*provocará repercusiones na propia textualidade e, consecuentemente, modificará a lectura que do texto*

⁶ As of 1999, the year of the book's fiftieth anniversary, feminist scholars were demanding a second English translation of the work from the publisher Random House. Finally, in 2006, Jonathan Cape (with the rights limited to the scope of Britain) announced a new translation by Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier.

*meta fará o destinatario final*⁷ (Yuste 2001: 850). Therefore, when paratranslators choose the title or a picture for the cover they are following an ideological communicative strategy that:

determina unha recepción, unha lectura ideolóxica e mesmo apunta ao tipo de público ao que vai dirixido. Tamén pode espectacularizar por medio desas imaxes ofrecendo tamén dese xeito adscripción xenérica, contido e argumento do libro.⁸ (Garrido 2005: 36)

Thus, although paratranslation is not only performed by those who translate, it does exert a strong influence on the acceptance of the translation, and this is why TS should also pay attention to the transmission of ideology at the paratextual level. Again, a feminist perspective shows how the feminist paratexts of the original, which the authors did have more power to decide over, are altered (perhaps even twisted) in an anything but naive way. This is easily illustrated by analysing the covers of two best-selling works by two explicitly feminist writers of contemporary Galician narratives. First of all (Fig. 1), María Reimóndez and her *O club da calceta* (2006), which in the original edition came with some knitting needles and a lilac background (a colour with feminist connotations). In the Italian translation, however, the knitting needles were no longer important because the picture featured the long (and carefully waxed) legs of a woman lying on a sofa, although this had nothing to do with any passage in the novel. The second example (Fig. 2) is the award-winning *Herba Moura* (2005) by Teresa Moure. The graphic elements of the original edition (a tapestry made out of different coloured fabrics) are replaced in the first Spanish edition by a blurred picture of a woman's face mixed with black nightshade (*herba moura*), and in the second edition there was now the picture of a very sensual, naked (medieval) woman seen from behind. That same image, but showing the whole face, was the one chosen for the Catalan translation entitled *Herba d'enamorar* (love herb, in English), showing a direct association to the properties of the herb *herba moura*. On the cover of the Italian translation one of the scenes from the plot is highlighted, with a title that sets the three main female characters in a position of dependence upon another character, Descartes (*Le tre donne di Cartesio*).



Fig. 1

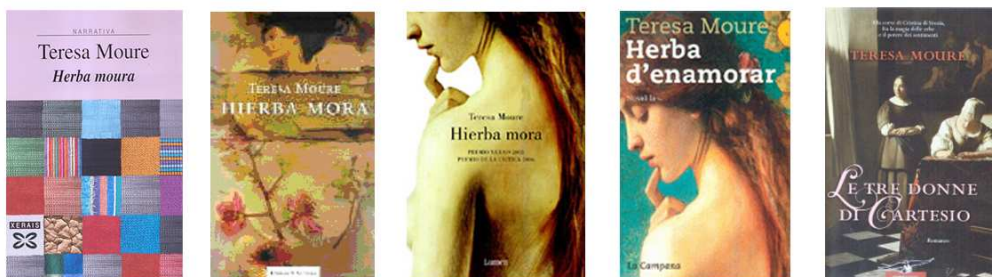


Fig. 2

⁷ “will have repercussions on the actual textuality and, consequently, it will modify the way the final reader interprets the target text”

⁸ “... determines a reception, an ideological interpretation, and even gives an idea of the type of target readers it is intended for. Those images can also be used as a rather spectacular means of reflecting the genre adscription, contents and plot of the book.”

2.4. *Practical plane: towards a third wave?*

This examination of the interactions between feminisms and translation also includes the practical plane, that is to say, the contribution made by feminisms to the comprehension of translational behaviour during the process in which a text in one language is converted into another text in another language. Unlike the critical plane, it is not just a question of analysing solutions that have (already) been adopted in the product, but of studying the process by which one or another is adopted.

2.4.1. Translational behaviour with respect to the textual representation⁹ of women and men

Given the close relationship between discursive and social practices, one of the areas that can be studied consists in analysing the translational behaviour in this process while bearing in mind the textual/linguistic representation of women and men in the texts.

The methodological tools to be used to carry out this analysis are provided by the framework of TS, which is characterised by the cultural or ideological turn mentioned earlier, together with the way the dominant ideology is interpreted from the feminist viewpoints: if we do not subscribe to a particular ideology, then we are (unconsciously) translating in accordance with the dominant one.

From the cultural turn we translate between cultures, but we must not forget that the counters we use to play the game (of translation) are words, sentences, texts and discourses. It therefore follows that, in addition to the cultural studies perspective, critical linguistics or critical discourse analysis (CDA) are also useful instruments with which to unmask how cultural and ideological values underlie certain discourses (cf. Fairclough 1995; Fowler et al. 1979). But the idea is to examine how the translator first reads and then transmits her or his interpretation of the linguistic representation of men and women in the text. To achieve this, the most appropriate thing to do is to resort to feminist critical linguistics, which combines critical linguistics with feminism. For this reason, its evolution is directly related with these two disciplines. And if, for years, it was conceived as second wave feminist linguistics (the one the Canadian translators had available to them and applied), now it is more productive for TS to evaluate the renewed possibilities of analysis offered by the “third wave feminist linguistics” proposed by Mills (2003 and 2008).

This third wave feminist linguistics means taking discourse as the unit of analysis, which brings it close to Lazar’s (2005) “feminist critical discourse analysis”. Thus, it abandons sweeping statements about the systematic uses of language and focuses on the specific detailed analysis of each statement (since there are different reading stances in each context); it avoids isolated analyses that may give rise to universal generalisations about men and women in order to always conduct contextualised analyses that make it possible to gain a correct understanding of how the limits of signification are established; and it refuses to consider man and woman as exclusive categories, but conceives them together with other variables (age, race, class, etc.) that they always interact with.

Applying this to translation creates a new methodological framework that we could call ‘third wave feminist translation’, whose first field of analysis would consist in addressing the discursive representation of women and men in the original text. This would always be carried out in a detailed, contextualised manner bearing in mind the interaction between gender and other variables. This discursive representation can become visible at different levels, such as the word (through specific terms or, in some languages, the linguistic gender) or the phrase (idioms, sayings, etc. in which there are no gender marks but implicitly they refer to men or women). It must also be borne in mind that they stop being isolated elements and become components of a discourse: that is to say, we have to take into account that the same word or phrase can be used in two discourses in such a way that it represents its referent differently, and thus it will never be possible to read them in an absolute manner.

⁹ Although I will defend a shift from the text to the discourse as the unit of analysis, I employ the notion of textual in contrast to paratextual.

Once this discursive representation has been addressed, we come to the second field of analysis: considering what translational problems that representation raises, bearing in mind the (linguistic and cultural) (im)possibilities of representing these same referents in the target language. In other words, we are talking about examining the translational problems taken in their discursive dimension, although they may appear in words or phrases. For example, there are the translational problems produced by words that, depending on the discourse, can have women and/or men as their referents ('children' as '*hijas*' [fem.], '*hijos*' [masc.], '*infancia*' [neutr.]); problems when we are faced with a masculine form and we do not know whether its meaning is generic or specific, this being important for the translation ('*tíos*' as 'uncles', 'uncles and aunts', 'aunt and uncles', etc.); problems when a text that does not make the sex of the referent explicit has to do so in the target text ('you're tired' as '*estás cansado*' [masc.] or '*cansada*' [fem.]); problems when a text explicitly mentions the sex of the referent but the target text does not need to make it explicit, although it can do ('*escritora*' [fem.] as 'writer' [neutr.] or 'woman writer' [fem.]); or, in general, ethical problems that may arise when translating a discourse that feminisms describe as reprehensible. But, furthermore, the third wave invites TS to consider what problems are not raised (although they exist) due to having performed an unconscious interpretation of the discursive representation and which will result in a re-writing in line with the dominant ideology. We are not just talking about the "Male-As-Norm Principle" (Braun 1997: 3) by which, if the sex of the referent is not known, the masculine will be chosen for the translation unless there are stereotypes to the contrary. What we are talking about is that sometimes the translator falls victim to what could be considered to be translational errors, even when viewed from a hegemonic position. These are errors like those illustrated in these examples, taken from an exercise with students from the Universidade de Vigo,¹⁰ in which 16 out of 30 students translated "one experiences one's pregnancy differently, every time" as "*un* [masc.] *vive o seu embarazo de xeito...*" and 23 out of 30 re-wrote "he's a very famous gynaecologist. His patients are very happy with him" as "*é un xinecólogo moi famoso. Os seus pacientes* [masc.] *están moi contentos...*", thus giving rise to inconceivable situations involving pregnant men and men who make appointments to visit gynaecologists. Here we should make a brief aside to highlight the need for a little (self-)criticism in the pedagogical theories of translation that would lead us, as claimed by Susam-Sarajeva (2006), to explore the role of education in generating critical and conscious attitudes about what translating involves.

The possible impossibility of translation, to use Godayol's words (2000: 123), requires searching for tactical temporalities with which to temporarily resolve those problems. This third and most thought-provoking phase is where feminisms suggest to TS the need for a (self-criticising) attitude in order to develop new debates on a practical level that consider the translation of gender within the framework of third wave feminist translation. One of these debates is that proposed by non-sexist translation (cf. Castro 2006), which evaluates how translation is affected by non-sexist language policies. Thus, based on a conscious and non-dominant interpretation of the discursive representation of women and men, non-sexist translation puts forward rewriting strategies that take into account the context of the translation (function of the text, audience, type of linguistic representation, language pairs, limitations of each text type such as poetry, sworn translation, dubbing, etc.). However, they must also value the intertexts of the target language (the increasing use of non-sexist language in the target text when writing the original texts). With regard to contexts and intertexts, non-sexist translation strategies are determined by the discursive contingency, which is why they require constant reflection and their validity is only temporary.

In any case, the third wave of feminist translation also adds two new dimensions to the reading and ideological transmission of the discursive representation of women and men. First of all, given its interest in the context, it encourages the examination of not only literary texts (as has been the case almost exclusively up till now both from the Canadian school and from later approaches) but also all kinds of text types. In this respect, the analyses by De Marco (2006) for audiovisual translation and by Sánchez (2007) on translating scientific discourse are

¹⁰ An empirical study conducted with students from the subject 'English/Galician translation and culture' (BA in Translation, Universidade de Vigo) in 2005/06.

interesting works. But, in addition to literary, scientific and audiovisual translation, today we are also living in the age of global communications, which means that other types of translation are becoming more and more frequent in our lives. This poses a new question, as the author of many of these documents is unknown and others are not even presented as translations. So, we also need to analyse how these two conditioning factors affect (or not) the reading and discursive rewriting of gender.

And secondly, given its interest in discourse (and in the word as a constituent part of a discourse that only takes on significance in its entirety), we should also examine how ideology affects (or not) the reading and rewriting of the discursive elements that have women and men as referents. Up till now we have theorised on and practised translation on the basis of texts either with either an explicit, conscious feminist ideology (the Canadian school, Díaz-Diocaretz, etc.) or an explicitly misogynistic ideology (Levine). It is about time we asked ourselves how to address the discursive representation of women and men when the texts do not openly manifest a particular ideology. This raises some new questions: What readings can the third wave of feminist translation perform to unmask the ideology when it is not obvious? If it is not explicit, does that mean it is unconscious (and therefore dominant)? What should the ethics of translation be based on?

2.4.2. Paratranslational behaviour with respect to the textual and paratextual representation of women and men

Translators are generally considered to be the main operators in the translation process, but their capacity to choose is often subordinated to the functional decisions taken by other mediatory agents, that is, paratranslators (people responsible for proof reading, language reviewers, editing, intermediation with clients, patrons, translation agencies, and so on), who usually have more power to intervene in the process. These paratranslators are responsible for revising the translation (and normally, but not always, making it fit their conscious or unconscious ideology), although in the end it is the translator who must publicly take responsibility for the choices made during the course of the (para)translation process. Thus, an analysis within the framework of the third wave of feminist translation will remain incomplete unless it also asks about the role played by paratranslators in two aspects. The first aspect concerns recommending or demanding a particular reading and translational rewriting of the discursive elements that represent women and men. And the second refers to their own interpretation and possible review of those elements as they appear in the translational rewriting, when the ideologies of the two professionals do not coincide. Both points are illustrated, in the German and Austrian context, in an interesting study by Wolf (2006).

In addition to these power relations between the person who translates and the person who paratranslates textual (or discursive) elements, in literary translation there are also a series of paratextual spaces that must be translated and/or created to accompany the text. Without a doubt TS would benefit from opening up this new field of analysis to examine the process by which paratranslators make different decisions when it comes to transferring paratextual (or paradiscursive) elements that verbally or iconically represent women and men.

3. Conclusions

Throughout this paper I have presented different areas of analysis that can be used to strengthen the debate between TS and feminisms from a (self-)criticising perspective. Only this perspective will allow us to evaluate the past interrelations and construct new productive horizons on top of them. This can be achieved, on the one hand, by going beyond the (dominant) proposal of the Canadian feminist translation school and drawing on new practical approaches to the process of translation and paratranslation that lie within the framework of the third wave of feminist translation. On the other hand, it is also necessary to enhance the interrelations on the conceptual, critical or historiographical plane, to cite but a few. There are in fact so many that, due to space restrictions, I have had to leave out other equally important fields of analysis, such as the differences between women and men (as far as translation is concerned) from a

neurobiological and neurolinguistic point of view (a very young and recent discipline that has yet to offer conclusive findings); the influence of a masculine or feminine subjectivity in translation (whether sex is or is not a factor that has an influence on the reading and rewriting performed by the translator); the influence of sex on the type of translation (the types of textualities that are most often translated by women and by men, if there are in fact any significant differences); or the working conditions under which the profession is practised from a gender perspective (percentage of female and male translators who are employed or self-employed workers in literary and non-literary translation, the percentage of female and male translators with a degree or postgraduate qualifications in translation, occupational diseases that affect women or men translators, and so forth). As can be seen, many lines of thought can be developed on the subject of translation studies and their interaction with feminisms, which will undoubtedly continue to kindle interesting debates in the coming years.

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